

Observatory Hill Inc. Community Organization  
Petitioner,  
And

Docket Number: A-2006-1

United States Postal Service  
Respondent.

## Supplement to The Petition For Review

To the Secretary of the Postal Rate Commission:

1. Petitioner respectfully provides additional reasons Observatory Post Office should not have been discontinued. Observatory post office should be re-open with the same energy, vigor and conviction by which it was closed. The reasons for fully closing the post office were not understood, not fully made known and intentionally not disclosed at a stage when the community, surrounding communities, and communities representative: Observatory Hill Inc. could make helpful contributions toward a final decision. It will be shown that postal service management did not meet in the community for fair and full input and the proposal to close was a dishonest charade, and a fraud.
2. The postal service did not seek input from the community. How come the community meeting could not be held within Observatory Hill? How come the postmaster chose instead to hold a meeting four miles away at the General Mail Facility? How come a meeting was held at 4:30pm instead of 6:30pm or 7pm? What was done to invite seniors and families who depend upon public transportation to arrive at such meeting? Perry High School is in front of Observatory Post Office. How about meeting at Perry Traditional High School?
3. The postmaster would not attend community meetings in the community for security reasons. The postmaster was ask on June 12, 2006 how come he never had a community meeting in Observatory at Perry Traditional High School. He said because the postal service does not have access. He was informed that the community or community organization has access. Just ask.
4. Observatory Hill's President informed the Postmaster that the proposal had errors. The Postmaster's reply: Does that make a difference? The postmaster made the remark June 12, 2006 four days before Observatory was permanently scheduled to close June 16, 2006. This demonstrates how arrogant, and arbitrary the postal service was in being committed to the community and due process. The postal service was committed to do all the necessary things it could to close the post office. This includes conveying to congressman Mike Doyle's chief of staff that the postal service held several community meetings with the community. This was not true. The community was not informed. This is not in accordance with the law, and did not follow procedure required by law Title 39, United States Code,

Section 404(b), while the implementing regulations appear in Title 39, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 241.3.

5. The process to close was Title 39, as it appears above and in the postal service "Proposal To Close": page three number 11 concern 2005. Observatory Hill Inc requested to know what steps were next and time line. The postal service did not answer OHI's request at all. Seven months went by and OHI ask their congressman to find out what the process was in order for the community to prepare to participate. The Postal Service said a reply would come in three weeks. The postal service sent a letter to Congressman Mike Doyle May 25, 2006. There is no appeal process and Observatory was closed June 16, 2006 even though no community meeting was ever held. The whole processes hide their true intentions.... the intention to close by any means and the arrogance to believe no one would appeal their decision or ask questions.
6. The letter to Congressman Doyle had no reference to regulation, no statutory regulations number or stipulation was referred to and yet the postal service states: "The Observatory Finance Station is considered a classified station or a unit that is operated by a Postal Service personnel under the administration of an independent Post Office, and so no appeal process applies".  
Richard L. Sekinger "for" Keith J. Beppler District Manager/Lead Executive.  
This document was given to the community's representative by Doyle's office.

Then on July 14, 2006 Ms. Hatcher; Observatory Hill Chair of its postal steering committee receives a letter from Michael Cafaro A/Postmaster, Pittsburgh that the reasons for the discontinuance of retain services at Observatory was set forth and followed by the postal service as it appears in Title 39, United States Code, Section 404(b), Regulations, Part 241.3.

The Postal Service has deceived the community and has been seriously dishonest in closing a good post office and a Congressional Investigation should begin. Any motion to dismiss the community's Petition for Review should not be accepted and the community's Petition For Review should be accepted and the Postal Service should be compelled to open up Observatory Post Office immediately.

7. The Observatory post office should have never closed or been considered to close in the first place. People need and want to do their postal business in Observatory because it still serves as the most convenient post office to reach. The post office has always been profitable, in the black, heavily used especially by seniors/families or those that depend upon effective postal service in Observatory. This fact was conveniently over looked by the postal service.

Postal service management made a mistake deciding to close the post office. The community ask several times for the postal service to work with the community. The postmaster was silent from July up to October of 2005 and did not speak with Observatory Hill Inc. The community's request continued to

fall on deaf ears and be ignored. The whole process was a sham. An agency should not set out and set up to close a profitable post office that effectively serves peoples postal needs. The walk in traffic is at least 65 people per day and part time brought in \$56,644.04 in 2004. This post office should be re-open because revenues far exceed the cost to run or the cost to the Postal Service.

Observatory "Walk-in Revenue for the past three years is as follows: FY02 WIR was \$116,285.75; FY03 WIR was \$74,661.27; and FY04 WIR \$56,644.05 (Proposal To Close The Observatory Finance Station And Continue To Provide City Delivery Service Docket Number 15214).

The postal service intended to mislead, be capricious, and chip away, little by little at the very life of Observatory post office by promoting the idea over and over again that the post office was not being used by the public. Their marketing strategy contributed to the public's impression over time that the post office was not being used. No documentation was ever presented to the community. The Postal Service wants to use declining workload as reason to close the Observatory Post Office. Their reason and rationale is weak and should be respectfully withdrawn by the Postal Service. The Postal Service obviously made a mistake here or their intent was to sabotage steadily over the years the quiet success of the Observatory Finance Station.

"A review of the business activities of the Observatory Finance revealed that the office workload has declined, and the office qualifies for service only four hours per day. Accordingly, the service hours were changed effective July 15, 2002, to 10:00AM to 2:00PM, Monday through Friday. Our office review revealed an average of 65 daily retail window transactions. Workload at the Observatory Finance has remained on the decline, however, the small number of customers served and minimal number of daily transactions conducted indicates that city delivery will continue to provide a maximum degree of effective and regular service to the Observatory community" (Proposal To Close The Observatory Finance Station And Continue To Provide City Delivery Service Docket Number 15214).

8. The campaign to close Observatory Hill began in the summer of 2002. The full time Clerk: Phillip Boar managed the Observatory Post Office for 14 years. The post office made at least \$150,000 a year from walk-in traffic alone. This is information the postal service does not want the community to know. This goes directly to the issue of intent and heart of the postal services attempt to build a weak case to close a viable post office in 2006.

9. Their intent was to immediately get upper level management in Washington DC, to approve closing the facility ( Note: Community's Petition To Keep Observatory Hill Post Office Open! This document represents the input of 6000 plus people and took three months to compile door to door. Also Note: Dr. William Ferianc and Richard Sestric were two of the eight people who attended the Postal Services meeting four miles away. Their input and insight is critical).
10. The Postal Service should have decided to withdraw its efforts to close this Observatory Post Office because it is the type and kind of post office Congress intended. Observatory continued to provide effective service to a ton of seniors in the area. This is the reason the Postal Service avoided wanting to meet and greet the community in the community. People would have found out the post office was profitable and served the community well. Walk-in traffic is the key.
11. Phillip Boar retired from a thriving, heavily used walk-in facility February 2002. Then five months later the post office cut the hours by 50% to part-time status: 8am - 5pm to 10am - 2pm for no reason provided to the community. The postal service did not involve the community or its community representative or prominently display a plan to reduce hours or conduct a feasibility study at all in 2002 and here we are again with the community continuing to be dismissed, and by-passed at every turn.
12. The Postal Service plan was to wear down the communities resolve and provide the effective perception that the post office no longer enjoyed profitable walk in service. The appeal process brings to light the actions of postal service management and how they decided not to follow the letter of the law and not follow the spirit of the law set by Congress section 101(b) of Title 39 of the United States Code, that states: "The Postal Service shall provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal service to rural areas, and small towns where post offices are not self sustaining. No small post office shall be closed solely for operating at a deficit, it being the specific intent of congress that effective postal service be insured to residents of both urban and rural communities."

Therefore, if a community post office were operating at a deficit and the workload was almost non-existent and you had a lady come in the post office every day to buy a stamp. The post office would continue to remain open and effectively serve the lady.

Here Observatory Post Office should be open today. It has the best of both worlds. The post office continues to be profitable, and get a good number of people using the facility.

13. Richard Sekinger Postmaster stated: the postal service rarely closes a post office because of revenue. Post offices are closed because they are no longer being used.

He further stated that the Observatory Post Office is being closed because people no longer use it. They have decided to go somewhere else. He further stated that The Observatory Post Office is the lowest revenue Finance Post Office in Pittsburgh because people no longer want to use the Observatory post office.

The Observatory President insisted revenues from Observatory are slightly up since last year and remain steady into April 2006. May 2006 cannot be counted because the hours of operation were permanently removed from the post office front door in the beginning of May. Many people thought the post office was already closed. Since the post office brings in at least \$50,000 in 2005. Doesn't this demonstrate Observatory Post Office gets lots of foot traffic? Doesn't this mean people still need and want and intend to use this post office? No response from postmaster.

The Postal Service knowingly intended to close Observatory post office as early as July 2002. When Phillip Boar retired after being clerk for 14-years in February 2002. The postal service cut the office hours in half five months later. People were unaware they had any rights. The Observatory Hill Inc. had to ask repeatedly of the Postal Service. If there was a process by which the community could participate in the discussion and provide their reason for how come the post office should remain open. Let us know. The community ask the Postal Service to attend several scheduled community meetings. The Postal Service did not respond until after their document was sent to upper level management in Washington DC October of 2005 (Note: Richard Sekinger's letter to Observatory Hill Inc. Dated: October 2005 addressed to Susan Rooney filed with the First Petition For Review).

The fact that the post office failed to consider the effect of the closing or consolidation on the community served by such post office, or whether such closing or consolidation is consistent with the policy of the Government, as section 101(b) of this title, that the Postal Service shall provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities, and small towns where post offices are not self sustaining; or provide the economic saving to the Postal Service resulting from such closing or consolidation; and other such factors as the Postal Service determines are necessary US Code: Title 39,404. Specific powers (b)(1)(2a)(I)(iii)(iv)(v).

The economic savings to the Postal Service is: Rental Costs, Excluding Utilities. The community factored in other cost and provide an additional \$8,000 for water, gas, sewage, and electrical. The community finds that the economic savings to the Postal Service was \$15,000: "Proposal to Close" economics savings stated by Postal Service was \$6,630.00.

If there were ever a reason to “Return to Sender” an idea to close an established, 70 year young respected, trusted, viable Observatory Finance Station Post Office. The Observatory Post Office should be open and the proposal to close should be rejected.

In view of the foregoing, Petitioner respectfully request that responded be compelled to continue operating the Observatory Post Office located on Perrysville Avenue across from Perry Traditional Academy in Observatory Hill right away.

Observatory Hill Incorporated,  
Petitioner

By: \_\_\_\_\_

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